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Security Council

Fifty-third Year

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3902nd Meeting
Monday, 13 July 1998, 12.20 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bahrain	Mr. Al-Dosari
	Brazil	Mr. Valle
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Costa Rica	Mr. Niehaus
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gabon	Mr. Dangue Réwaka
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Japan	Mr. Konishi
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Portugal	Mr. Soares
	Slovenia	Mr. Türk
	Sweden	Mr. Lidén
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Gomersall
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

Fifth report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Sierra Leone (S/1998/486 and Add.1)

98-85576 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 12.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Sierra Leone

Fifth report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Sierra Leone (S/1998/486 and Add.1)

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Austria, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Khyne-Sam (Sierra Leone) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Manz (Austria) and Mr. Gambari (Nigeria) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the fifth report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Sierra Leone, document S/1998/486 and Add.1. Members of the Council also have before them document S/1998/620, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1998/629, which contains the text of a letter dated 10 July 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The first speaker on my list is the representative of Austria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Manz (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia — and the Associated country Cyprus, as well as the countries of the European Free Trade Association members of the European Economic Area — Liechtenstein and Norway — align themselves with this statement.

The European Union warmly welcomes the decision of the Security Council to establish the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). We fully agree that, through the deployment of military observers, civilian police staff and human rights officers, much-needed impetus can be lent to the vital but still fragile peace and reconciliation process in Sierra Leone. This process deserves the full support of the international community.

The European Union welcomes the significant actions taken by the Government of Sierra Leone towards stabilization in the country. Following its restoration on 10 March 1998, the Government has moved swiftly in order to re-establish an effective administration and the democratic process. The European Union congratulates President Kabbah on the nomination of acknowledged experts in the relevant fields to his Cabinet and the nomination of the Chief Justice, all of whom have been confirmed by the Parliament.

The Government of Sierra Leone has also embarked on the central task of national reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation. We strongly encourage the Government of Sierra Leone to keep to its resolve to adhere to international human rights standards and to ensure that those accused of the gravest crimes against the State and the people of Sierra Leone receive fair trials.

The European Union welcomes the recent announcement of the Government of Sierra Leone that it would grant amnesty to all child soldiers. In this context, we note the important efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict to make Sierra Leone one of the pilot projects in order to respond in a more vigorous and concerted fashion to the needs of children in the context of post-conflict peace-building. On the occasion of his recent visit to Sierra Leone, Special Representative Olara Otunnu identified five areas which require urgent action:

the demobilization and reintegration of child combatants; the resettlement of internally displaced persons; the tracing of families of unaccompanied children; the rehabilitation and support of victims without limbs; and the provision and rehabilitation of medical and educational services. These needs call for an immediate response by the international community.

The European Union welcomes the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to establish a National Commission for Reconstruction, Resettlement and Rehabilitation and we note that a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan — agreed with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the United Nations Development Programme and other donors, and assisted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) — has already been adopted. In this context, the European Union would like to commend the important role that ECOWAS has continued to play towards the peaceful resolution of the crisis. We encourage ECOMOG to proceed in its important efforts to foster peace and stability in Sierra Leone and to closely cooperate with UNOMSIL.

It is the European Union's view that successful national reconstruction and rehabilitation have to be accompanied by regional cooperation. The European Union welcomes the efforts of regional leaders to promote mutual cooperation in the subregion and, particularly, relations between Liberia and Sierra Leone.

In spite of promising developments in the country, the European Union remains deeply concerned about the continued presence of remnants of the ousted junta and members of the Revolutionary United Front in the eastern part as well as in some areas in the north of Sierra Leone. The European Union condemns the continued resistance of these elements against the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone and joins the Secretary-General in calling on them to lay down theirs arms and to surrender immediately. The European Union strongly condemns the mutilations, rapes, looting and all the other atrocities carried out by the rebels. The European Union calls for an immediate end to all violence against the civilian population of Sierra Leone. Any military support being provided to the rebels has to cease. In this context, the European Union stresses the importance that the provisions of resolutions 1132 (1997) and 1171 (1998) be strictly observed and that any action be avoided that might destabilize the situation in Sierra Leone.

The European Union commends the courageous efforts of the United Nations and other international humanitarian personnel who are active in Sierra Leone. We remain concerned for their safety and call on all parties concerned to facilitate the work of the humanitarian agencies.

During the recent crisis in Sierra Leone, the European Union, as a principal donor, continued to provide humanitarian assistance through non-governmental organizations and international agencies. Additional aid is given in the form of an emergency agricultural recovery programme to enable farmers to resume food production activities as soon as possible. The European Union is also providing assistance to Sierra Leone refugees in Guinea, aimed at facilitating the return and reintegration of the refugees as soon as is practically possible.

With the reinstatement of a democratic civilian Government in March 1998, the European Union is preparing to resume programmes suspended last year after the *coup d'état*. Of immediate priority are projects related to institutional support and rehabilitation of the country. Special attention will be given to the reintegration of demobilized soldiers and the demobilization of child combatants, building upon the experience gained in other cases.

The European Union would wish to express its deep appreciation to the Secretary-General and to his Special Envoy, Mr. Francis Okelo, for their tireless efforts aimed at restoring peace and security in Sierra Leone. In this context, the European Union welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to convene a special conference on 30 July 1998 in New York in order to mobilize international assistance for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, and for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Sierra Leone. The European Union will participate actively in that conference.

Mr. Gomersall (United Kingdom): The establishment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) by today's draft resolution will be extremely welcome. First, the mission will be only the third peacekeeping operation to have been sent out by the United Nations in over two years. Following the establishment of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) in March this year, this sets an encouraging trend for greater United Nations involvement in Africa.

As in the case of MINURCA, the mandate and shape of the operation to be authorized today also reflects the growing cooperation of the United Nations with regional groupings or organizations and coalitions of States, as highlighted in the Secretary-General's report on Africa [S/1998/318]. UNOMSIL's mandate, which tasks United Nations military observers with monitoring the implementation of a national disarmament and demobilization process, which is being conducted by a regional peacekeeping force, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), is a good example of this.

Even more important, this mission is a crucial opportunity for Sierra Leone. We missed a similar opportunity early last year, and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) coup that followed set back the cause of peace and reconstruction against the interests of the country for over a year. Now we have a new chance to contribute to a peaceful settlement of a crisis which has lasted far too long.

The presence of United Nations observers in support of ECOMOG's disarmament activities should help guarantee the impartiality of the national disarmament and demobilization plan and boost confidence in its successful implementation, encouraging fighters to come out from the bush, to give up their weapons and to be reintegrated into national society.

The United Kingdom is glad to have been a strong supporter of this draft resolution, of the people of Sierra Leone and of their legitimate Government. But this draft resolution and the establishment of a peacekeeping operation are not enough. The Government of Sierra Leone is doing its part, through continued progress to re-establish effective administration and to reinforce democratic institutions and the rule of law, and through steps to promote national reconciliation and reconstruction.

We also commend ECOWAS and ECOMOG for what they have achieved in Sierra Leone. We applaud their efforts, at great cost in lives and resources, to restore peaceful and secure conditions throughout the country, and welcome their readiness to ensure the security of United Nations personnel. ECOMOG deserves our gratitude.

But the Government of Sierra Leone, ECOMOG and UNOMSIL need greater support from the international community if this combined strategy for peace and rehabilitation is to succeed. The United Kingdom has donated £2 million to a United Nations Trust Fund for peacekeeping in Sierra Leone. We have also supplied two British military officers to assist the Special Envoy, Mr. Okelo, and are now considering how we can provide further support for UNOMSIL. The United Kingdom has also provided significant emergency aid and longer-term development aid to Sierra Leone.

In this context, we warmly welcome the Secretary-General's initiative to hold a high-level special political conference on Sierra Leone on 30 July to help mobilize urgently needed support for ECOMOG and the Sierra Leonean Government. The United Kingdom pledges its full backing for this initiative; a British minister will attend, and we hope that representatives of many other Member States will do the same.

In the meantime, we urge other United Nations Member States to contribute to the Trust Fund to provide technical and logistical support to ECOMOG, and to support the disarmament and demobilization programme and other development activity in the country.

The intervention of ECOMOG, the creation of the national disarmament and demobilization plan and the forthcoming deployment of UNOMSIL have created the conditions for a decisive change in Sierra Leone. The international community should ensure, not only through the present draft resolution, but through its material support, that Sierra Leone can make the most of that chance.

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of Nigeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria): Permit me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. Although Nigeria left the Security Council as a non-permanent member more than two years ago, my delegation recalls the occasions when you presided over the Council during our tenure; therefore, we are confident that under your able leadership, the deliberations of the Council will be conducted with skill and wisdom and in a manner that will ensure justice and enhance the principles and purposes of the Charter.

The adoption of a draft resolution creating the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) will be a unique milestone in the constructive relationship between the United Nations and

the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) in the efforts to restore peace and security to Sierra Leone. The positive role of ECOWAS and the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in the process of restoring stability at the request of the democratically elected Government of Sierra Leone is well documented and has been acknowledged consistently by the Security Council and its members, including the last speaker. States members of ECOWAS committed substantial human and material resources to the overthrow of the junta in Sierra Leone. The peace plan for Sierra Leone supported by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations was successfully implemented by ECOWAS heads of State.

It was indeed a remarkable occasion when the legitimate Government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah was restored to power in Sierra Leone on 10 March 1998. It was, however, obvious that more needed to be done to consolidate peace and stability in Sierra Leone. In this regard, urgent and concrete support in the form of financial, logistical and material resources is needed to enable ECOMOG to defeat the remnants of the junta, who continue to commit unspeakable atrocities in parts of Sierra Leone; this support would assist the process of reconciliation and reconstruction in that country. Furthermore, considerable humanitarian assistance is required for Sierra Leone, as well as for neighbouring countries which continue to host large numbers of refugees.

Recently, at the initiative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, the Chairman of ECOWAS and head of State of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, hosted a meeting between President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone and President Taylor of Liberia, which took place at Abuja on 2 July 1998. The meeting, which was co-chaired by the Chairman of ECOWAS and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, addressed a number of regional and subregional issues, including, in particular, ways in which security and cooperation between the neighbouring States of Liberia and Sierra Leone could be further improved and the role ECOWAS and the United Nations could play in support of such efforts. The communiqué issued at the end of the Abuja mini-summit contains important agreements which should now be implemented in full and without further delay.

It is timely that the United Nations-proposed conference on Sierra Leone has been scheduled for 30 July 1998. The conference would be the appropriate forum to sensitize the international community to peacekeeping activities and to encourage the donation of humanitarian and emergency provisions. The Nigerian delegation, as well as other members of ECOWAS, would join with others to ensure the success of the conference.

Meanwhile, we wish to draw attention to the fact that the Trust Fund that would support peacekeeping efforts in Sierra Leone still requires substantial contributions from Member States of the United Nations, and my delegation, on behalf of ECOWAS, will call on them to make contributions.

Furthermore, concrete assistance from States in the form of logistical and technical support would help the Government of Sierra Leone directly in its quest for reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country.

We welcome the recommendation of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict, Ambassador Olara Otunnu, that Sierra Leone be recognized as one of the pilot projects for a more effective response to the needs of children in post-conflict peace-building. This recommendation, along with the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to pursue an effective national response to the fate of children affected by armed conflict, augurs well for the welfare of children suffering as a result of violent conflicts.

It will, however, be an even greater achievement when the international community eventually succeeds in preventing the involvement of and the assault on children and puts an end to the phenomenon of child soldiers in many parts of the world, particularly on the African continent.

The establishment of UNOMSIL, consisting of military observers, a well-equipped medical unit and civilian support staff, should help in the monitoring of several aspects of the military and security situation in Sierra Leone, including, in particular, the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants.

My delegation welcomes very much the establishment of UNOMSIL and wishes it success in carrying out its mandate on behalf of the subregion and the international community as a whole. It is important, however, to emphasize that the success of UNOMSIL will depend to a large extent on continued close cooperation and mutual support between UNOMSIL and ECOMOG. Such cooperation and support would undoubtedly encourage greater and successful collaboration not only between the United Nations and

ECOWAS, but also between the United Nations and other regional bodies.

The President(*interpretation from Russian*): I thank the representative of Nigeria for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Mahugu (Kenya): Kenya joins the consensus on the draft resolution to establish the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). The draft resolution reaffirms the commitment of the United Nations and of the international community to the long-term maintenance of peace and security in Sierra Leone. We would also like to commend the delegation of the United Kingdom for coordinating negotiations on the text before us.

We also welcome the presence here today, in this Chamber, of our brothers from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), under whose umbrella the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) has done a commendable job in restoring the democratically elected Government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and in trying to finally bring about real peace in Sierra Leone.

In May 1997, Kenya and other members of the international community called on the members of the junta to step down in order to enable Sierra Leone to resume its rightful place among the community of nations. Even after being deposed, these former junta members have refused to lay down their arms and are committing unspeakable atrocities in the north and east of the country. These revenge killings, with no military or strategic value, have got to stop. We demand that they lay down their arms and let Sierra Leoneans return to their lives in peace and harmony.

Sierra Leone would not be where it is today without the heroic and superb efforts of ECOMOG. We are therefore happy to note that this draft resolution recognizes, and indeed commends, its positive role and calls on the international community to provide more logistical and financial assistance to assist its efforts. It is encouraging to note that it has been receiving such help from some members of the international community. We know that more can be done. In a period of diminishing resources and fatigue from helping others, this is a truly honourable cause and worth every single penny.

Kenya welcomes the establishment of UNOMSIL as a step in the right direction and will continue to support the efforts of Mr. Francis Okelo, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone. We stand ready, as always, to contribute military officers and civilian police to enable the United Nations to achieve its objective of maintaining international peace and security. We also commend the Secretary-General for convening a high-level conference on Sierra Leone at the end of this month, which we believe will mobilize international support for Sierra Leone as it searches for concrete solutions to its problems in this peace-building process.

The military problems posed by the rebels are compounded even further by cross-border arms flows and support to those rebels. In this regard, the expression of serious concern contained in the draft resolution meets Kenya's demand that the parties concerned immediately stop these activities, while the draft also reaffirms the obligations of all States to comply strictly with the terms of the arms embargo in place.

While it is inappropriate to point fingers at any State, we must urgently appeal to all profiteers to stop this evil trade that is increasing the senseless loss of lives in Sierra Leone. In fact, these arms in the hands of rebels have made the humanitarian problems in Sierra Leone even more complex. Whereas in earlier days humanitarian agencies would have been focused on issues such as the supply of food and medicine, they are now engaged in complex medical procedures, including the replacement of limbs, as well as providing psychological assistance to address the traumatic effects of atrocities committed against innocent victims.

It is for these reasons that we welcome the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to coordinate an effective national response to the needs of children affected by armed conflict. We are happy to note that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict, Ambassador Olara Otunnu, intends to make Sierra Leone one of the pilot projects for a more concerted response to the needs of children in a post-conflict setting. Against this background, we hope that we can enhance our support of his missions, including through the provision of adequate financial resources, to achieve these objectives.

In conclusion, as Sierra Leone begins a new journey in reviving its nation, as it did on 27 April 1961, when it attained its independence, the objective of national reconciliation must always be at the heart of all activities. We are encouraged to note that the Government of Sierra Leone continues to reach out in this regard, and we encourage it to do more, because therein lies the

foundation of long-lasting peace and stability for that great nation.

Mr. Türk (Slovenia): There is a bitter irony about the present predicament of Sierra Leone. The country began to descend into a spiral of senseless violence, power struggles, coups and counter-coups in March 1991, when a motley group of fighters calling themselves the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) entered eastern Sierra Leone at Koindu and at the Mano River bridge. This invasion came on the heels of the decision of the Government of Sierra Leone to participate actively in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) peacekeeping operation in neighbouring Liberia. Sierra Leone has thus paid dearly for taking seriously and responsibly its commitments and obligations to regional stability.

The latest in a series of coups took place in May 1997, when mutinous elements within the military overthrew the new democratically elected Government and joined forces with the RUF. That development threw Sierra Leone into chaos and has constituted a threat to peace and security in the region. It is therefore incumbent on the Security Council in this crucial period to go beyond the actions it took in resolutions 1132 (1997) and 1171 (1998).

The draft resolution put before the Security Council for action today represents an appropriate response. It addresses the complexity of the problems facing the restored democratic Government of President Kabbah, and it complements the political and military assistance of ECOMOG, the Monitoring Group of ECOWAS, in the effort to restore peace and normalcy in Sierra Leone.

Slovenia will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution by which the Security Council decides to establish a United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) for an initial period of six months. We agree that the presence of United Nations military observers, civilian police and human rights monitors will represent a real contribution in the effort to stabilize the situation and create conditions of durable peace in Sierra Leone.

One of the issues high on the agenda is disarmament and demobilization. The reinstated Government inherits a country with no functioning army but a large number of fragmented armed elements. On the one hand, there are the remnants of the military junta and the RUF, and, on the other, there are the members of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF). The likelihood of further conflict will remain high unless real progress can be made to disarm and demobilize the combatants. In this context, Slovenia condemns the continued resistance of the deposed junta and the RUF, and joins the other members of the Security Council in demanding that they lay down their arms immediately.

Equally important is the question of reconciliation and reintegration. This is a sensitive issue, especially in the light of the numerous child soldiers who have been forcibly recruited by the RUF. In order to ensure the loyalty of these young children, the RUF elements often force them to brutalize or murder their own families, thus destroying the bonds of trust between children and their communities. A genuine, long-term process of reconciliation is needed to pull these children back into society. Slovenia therefore welcomes the efforts to make Sierra Leone one of the pilot projects for a more concerted and effective response to the post-conflict needs of children.

Despite all the destruction and mayhem, Sierra Leone is still a richly endowed country. Indeed, the green in the Sierra Leonean tricolour stands for the country's ample natural resources. But Sierra Leone's most important asset is the fact that it is a nation in which the indigenous ethnic groups share broadly similar cultures. There is no religious strife, and intermarriage is common. The ethnic groups of the country have preserved peace among them in the period of the rule of the junta. Moreover, the people of Sierra Leone demonstrated at the February and March 1996 elections their strong support for democratic rule and the ability to use democratic means, which guarantee the legitimacy of political power.

In this context, it is also important to note that Sierra Leone is not suffering a civil war. The RUF has no viable political support or even an identifiable constituency, which is why it has in the past refused repeated invitations to join the political process. Together with the remnants of the military junta, it now constitutes an amorphous formation which has no clear leadership structure. The violence against the civilian population in Sierra Leone, as horrible as it is, has therefore not undermined the foundations of the country.

Sierra Leone possesses all the prerequisites for a successful nation. What is required is that Sierra Leoneans draw upon their strengths and that the international community help them in their efforts. Slovenia is therefore encouraged by the ability of the

Security Council to act today unanimously. The degree of unity among Council members will undoubtedly contribute to the process of success of UNOMSIL's mission to help the people of Sierra Leone forge a secure future for themselves and for their children.

Mr. Konishi (Japan): Japan attaches great importance to the positive role of the United Nations in restoring peace and stability and in enhancing the protection of human rights in Sierra Leone following the reinstatement of the legitimate Government of President Kabbah in March. On behalf of the Japanese delegation, I should like to express my particular appreciation in this regard to Mr. Francis Okelo, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General. I wish also to commend the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) for their efforts to restore peace and security in West Africa.

Having said that, I must also express the profound concern of the Government of Japan at the continued resistance by the remnants of the ousted junta and members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the serious violations of international humanitarian law which they are committing against the civilian population of Sierra Leone. Reports of the violation of the human rights of children are especially disturbing, particularly since the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict, Mr. Olara Otunnu, recently recommended that Sierra Leone be the focus of a pilot project responding to the needs of children.

It is important that soldiers relinquish their weapons and be reintegrated into society. Indeed, the process of disarmament and demobilization being pursued by the Government of Sierra Leone towards that end is essential not only for the restoration of peace and security but also for the economic and social recovery and development of Sierra Leone.

Japan's support for the draft resolution before us is based on its understanding that the role of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) is to monitor the disarmament and demobilization process on behalf of the Sierra Leone Government and ECOMOG, as well as to provide the necessary support for the maintenance of peace and security in the region. We believe that UNOMSIL, building upon the work of Special Envoy Okelo and in coordination with ECOMOG, will provide the most effective means of fostering the normalization of the situation in that country. We would also welcome the deployment of ECOMOG to monitor the border area between Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Finally, let me say a word about the deplorable delay in the delivery of humanitarian assistance in the face of the increasing numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, due to the deterioration of the security situation in the country. Japan, for its part, has responded to the flash appeal by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), contributing as much as it can to help alleviate this situation. We strongly hope that humanitarian relief activities can be carried out effectively in the coming rainy season so that a further deterioration of the situation can be avoided.

Japan also welcomes the Secretary-General's initiative to convene a special conference on 30 July to assist in the reconstruction and rehabilitation process in Sierra Leone. Japan is ready to take an active part in that conference.

The people of Sierra Leone have suffered severe hardships for far too long. Japan sincerely hopes that their suffering will be alleviated and that they can soon begin to enjoy the fruits of peace and development.

Mr. Niehaus (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): This is the second time that my delegation has taken part in a meeting of the Security Council to establish a peacekeeping mission. We are particularly pleased to be approving this mission to Sierra Leone in view of the fact that that country, after confronting a chaotic situation, has embarked on the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction with the assistance of the international community.

I take this opportunity to reiterate the importance Costa Rica attaches to the role played by the Council in the transition towards peace and in the peace-building process. We are particularly pleased, therefore, to note that this has been the orientation of the new missions we have approved this year.

The people of Sierra Leone have come a long way since the military coup of 25 May 1997. We welcomed the report on the swift progress achieved by the Government of Sierra Leone in establishing constitutional order and all of the efforts made to promote national reconciliation. This case can serve as a model for many of the initiatives and activities that are under way.

First, my country firmly believes in the importance of regional and subregional organizations. In this case, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has played a crucial role, and the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) continues to be the body entrusted with monitoring security and maintaining stability in Sierra Leone. My country supports all the initiatives designed to strengthen the links between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations in all areas, as well as the establishment of direct and steady information channels.

Secondly, Costa Rica supported the lifting of the sanctions imposed under resolution 1132 (1997) when conditions were appropriate. This demonstrated that sanctions have a specific application and that they should not be permanent. The change that was effected through the adoption of resolution 1171 (1998) serves to demonstrate that this mechanism can be used solely in order to punish those who fail to comply with the resolutions of the Council and threaten international peace and security.

Thirdly, Costa Rica supports the establishment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) for an initial period of six months to monitor security throughout the country and assist the Government and ECOMOG in disarmament and demobilization activities, to monitor the demobilization of former combatants, to monitor compliance with international humanitarian law and to observe security conditions in various areas of the country. This operation, which will be under the authority of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, will depend upon civilian components whose functions Costa Rica considers to be very important. The preparation of an effective police force is vital for the maintenance of security in Sierra Leone, which is why the component designed to support such an effort is indispensable.

The other civilian component forming part of the mission will deal with human rights, and Costa Rica considers this to be vital. The reports about attacks on the civilian population by rebel forces, especially in the north of the country, are extremely worrying. The numbers reported of civilians who have been attacked, mutilated or raped, and the number of deaths, continue to be extremely high. For my delegation, this is the main problem that must be considered and resolved immediately. In this context, my delegation agrees with the view expressed in the report of the Secretary-General that these actions must be documented so that we can combat impunity. We also support the recommendation of the Secretary-General that the human rights component of the office of the Special Envoy be enhanced, that it form part of the mission and, furthermore, as indicated in the draft resolution before us, that it help the Government of Sierra Leone enhance its human rights institutions.

In conclusion, I should like to express my country's concern about the situation of refugees and internally displaced persons in Sierra Leone. Every day an increasing number of civilians flee to camps in Guinea and Liberia and the number of refugees increases. According to reports of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, as many as 300 people set off for Guinea every day to seek refuge, and it has been calculated that 150,000 people have already sought refuge in Guinea and Liberia. Internally, the number of displaced persons has reached a figure of more than 30,000. We hope that the efforts of the international community and humanitarian aid agencies will help reduce these alarming figures.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Since last March, President Kabbah and the Government of Sierra Leone have adopted a series of effective measures to stabilize the general situation in that country. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) has played a positive role in this, and the Chinese delegation expresses its appreciation to it. However, the situation in Sierra Leone has not been fully stabilized. Some armed rebels from the former military junta are continuing to resist and to carry out atrocities against the civilian population. There are also signs that certain elements in Liberia are involved in the rebel activities against the Government of Sierra Leone. The Government of China expresses deep concern about this matter and hopes that it will receive the attention of the international community.

In response to the request of the Government of Sierra Leone and other African countries concerned, the United Nations will dispatch an observer mission to Sierra Leone to assist the host Government and ECOMOG to restore stability in Sierra Leone and facilitate national reconciliation. This is the second time in recent years that the Security Council has deployed a peacekeeping mission in Africa, which demonstrates the will of the international community actively to support and assist the African countries in bringing about peace and stability. We believe that the establishment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) will be conducive to the stability of Sierra

Leone and the surrounding region and that it will also facilitate the swifter achievement of national reconciliation and the beginning of economic reconstruction.

The Government of China therefore supports the establishment of UNOMSIL and will give positive consideration to the dispatch of military observers to the mission. We hope that the Secretariat will work with the host Government and ECOMOG to finalize the arrangements at an early date so as to ensure the safety of military observers and other personnel of the Observer Mission. We also hope that UNOMSIL will take full account of the opinion of the Government of Sierra Leone, fully respect its sovereignty and cooperate well with ECOMOG.

China will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Al-Dosari (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for the detailed and extensive report in document S/1998/486. I would be remiss not to express our thanks to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, to the United Nations staff in Sierra Leone and to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) for their commendable efforts to restore peace and stability to Sierra Leone.

The report refers to many positive steps undertaken by the Government of Sierra Leone following the reinstatement of the elected President, Mr. Kabbah. However, there have been many repercussions, and many problems must be dealt with, such as fostering peace and stability in the country and disarming the former supporters of the junta, who are still attacking innocent, defenceless civilians — displacing them, endangering their lives, violating their rights and committing atrocities against them. My delegation condemns these atrocities, which jeopardize the peace and stability of the country and impede the achievement of national reconciliation.

Given the current security and social situation in Sierra Leone, my delegation hopes that the establishment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) will contribute to peace and security in the country in particular and in the region in general. The task of the Mission will complement that of ECOMOG. That is why my delegation underlines the importance of close coordination between the two missions. We also call upon all the parties concerned to guarantee the safety and security of the members of the Mission and to protect its property so that it will be able to achieve the desired objectives.

We also welcome the decision of the Secretary-General to convene a high-level special political conference to mobilize resources for peacekeeping activities, emergency humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and rehabilitation in Sierra Leone.

In light of all this, my delegation will join the consensus on the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Dangue Réwaka (Gabon) (*interpretation from French*): The efforts made by the Economic Community of West African States, through its Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), to re-establish constitutional legality and restore peace in Sierra Leone deserve to be not only welcomed, but also supported by the international community. Indeed, these efforts have allowed the democratically elected Government to undertake action, in particular, to reorganize its administration and launch national reconciliation.

The tangible and commendable contribution of the Secretary-General, embodied in the dispatch of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone, will rightly help to achieve the goals of peace and reconstruction in Sierra Leone. The full achievement of these objectives naturally includes monitoring the military and security situation, disarmament, demobilization, and respect for international humanitarian law.

For all these reasons, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution establishing UNOMSIL.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): Today's decision to establish the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) is an important contribution of the international community to the process of peace and reconciliation in Sierra Leone. My country gives special importance to the fact that, in addition to monitoring the military and security situation and the process of disarmament and demobilization, the mandate also includes monitoring respect for international humanitarian law and human rights.

UNOMSIL will continue and strengthen the important work of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francis Okelo, and his colleagues, whose devoted efforts I would like to take this opportunity to commend.

The strongest imperative now for Sierra Leone is of course the cessation of hostilities, followed by disarmament and demobilization. Equally important, however, is the need for a wider perspective on how to reach a long-term solution. The emphasis given in the draft resolution to the need to engage in a genuine process of national reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation is therefore essential and thus also seeks to address the fundamental causes of the conflict. The Government of Sierra Leone should be commended for the actions taken in this field, aimed at stabilizing the country and strengthening democratic institutions.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has played an important role in the process towards peace in Sierra Leone. Its Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) should be encouraged to coordinate its efforts with UNOMSIL. The joint efforts of the United Nations and ECOMOG, as a subregional organization, are well in line with the overall ambition of the international community to support and strengthen African peacekeeping capacity.

The continued resistance to the legitimate Government and the violence perpetrated against the civilian population by members of the Revolutionary United Front and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council are unacceptable. Sweden strongly condemns the atrocities committed against the civilian population by the rebels. We urge all parties involved to respect human rights and international humanitarian law.

There is also continuing concern about the political instability in the region as a whole. The recent meeting between the Presidents of Sierra Leone and Liberia on 2 July was, however, a positive step. We also welcome the constructive cooperation of the Liberian Government in supporting the possible deployment of military observers along the border between the two countries.

The importance of coordinated and comprehensive action cannot be overestimated. Although the responsibility lies primarily with the Government of Sierra Leone, the international community also has a vital role.

Bearing in mind the grave humanitarian situation, Sweden welcomes the humanitarian efforts made by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other organizations, despite the limited financial resources made available to date. In this context, I would like to mention that, in June, Sweden decided to contribute approximately $1 million to support UNHCR in assisting Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea (Conakry) and Liberia, in addition to our previous contributions to humanitarian efforts in Sierra Leone.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): The difficulties experienced by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in stemming the activities of the rebellion and members of the former military junta in Sierra Leone show that the situation there remains fragile and that the progress that has been achieved remains threatened. These uncertainties should not prevent us, however, from welcoming the re-establishment of the constitutional Government of Sierra Leone or from being gratified by its manifest intentions to undertake reform, especially regarding the state of law and the restructuring of the State.

The presence of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) should help to stabilize the situation and allow the legal authorities of Sierra Leone to consolidate their authority. We were therefore particularly pleased by the initiatives undertaken by several members of the Council to establish, organize and gain approval for the Observer Mission. This will be the second new operation to be created in three months by the Security Council in Africa. In this decision, we see proof of the interest of the Security Council and the international community in assisting Africa to prevent and settle crises.

The establishment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone allows both the military and civilian dimensions of the conflict to be addressed. The diversity of the tasks assigned to the Mission reflects these aspirations. These include monitoring the programme for demobilizing and reintegrating former combatants; assisting in monitoring respect for international humanitarian law, as was just emphasized by the Ambassador of Sweden; monitoring the programme to restructure the police force; and providing technical assistance to help the Government of Sierra Leone to cope with the needs of the country in the field of human rights.

UNOMSIL is also an interesting, promising and potentially fruitful experiment in coordination between a regional operation — that of ECOMOG on behalf of ECOWAS — and a United Nations operation. We welcome the important contribution this experiment will

make to stabilization in that country. UNOMSIL's success will therefore depend on tangible cooperation between the two missions: the primary mission of ECOMOG and the complementary one of UNOMSIL. Once again, however, this cooperation must be along the desired lines between the United Nations and the regional organizations in which we place our trust.

UNOMSIL falls within the political framework of genuine national reconciliation. Once again, we are gratified by the intentions expressed by the Government of Sierra Leone in this respect. We therefore hope that UNOMSIL will be able to support all initiatives, in particular those of the Government, to restore the democratic process and to speed up Sierra Leone's reconstruction and recovery.

Mr. Soares (Portugal): I would like to start by saying that Portugal concurs fully with the statement just made by the representative of the Presidency of the European Union.

The consequences of the conflict in Sierra Leone and what seems currently to be the gradual emergence of a post-conflict situation require a coordinated response both from the international community and from the legitimate Government of that State. Without political will in Sierra Leone to overcome the current political and economic challenges, the consolidation of peace will remain illusory; but the same could be said if the international community failed to provide credible assistance to the people of Sierra Leone.

In this regard, Portugal commends the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to re-establish the democratic process and to promote the tasks of national reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation. We welcome in particular the recent adoption by President Kabbah of a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan.

Our delegation attaches special importance to the provisions of the draft resolution before the Council which emphasize the need to promote national reconciliation. We also join others in demanding not only that the remnants of the ousted junta and members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) lay down their arms immediately, but also that all forces and factions in Sierra Leone respect human rights and strictly abide by the rules of international humanitarian law. Full adherence to the arms embargo imposed by resolution 1171 (1998), in particular by neighbouring countries, would also be instrumental for the stabilization of Sierra Leone.

In this context, the establishment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) will also be a meaningful step in the right direction. Its carefully designed mandate is quite clear and has to be fully respected by all relevant actors in this process. We welcome the commitment of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to ensure the security of United Nations personnel, and we hope that the necessary security arrangements can be concluded before UNOMSIL observers are actually sent to Sierra Leone.

Portugal also underlines the importance of paragraph 14 of the draft resolution, which welcomes the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to coordinate a national response to the needs of children affected by armed conflict, as well as the recommendation of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict that Sierra Leone be made a pilot project in the context of post-conflict peace-building. The open debate on this issue which took place in this Chamber last month under the Portuguese presidency and the subsequent adoption of the presidential statement of 29 June 1998 demonstrate the particular importance the Council attaches to this theme.

For the reasons just stated, Portugal will support the draft resolution before the Council.

Mr. Valle (Brazil): For the fourth time this year the Security Council is meeting to adopt a draft resolution on the situation in Sierra Leone. Immediately after President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah was restored to his constitutional mandate, the Council adopted, on 16 March, resolution 1156 (1998), which lifted the embargo on petroleum products established by resolution 1132 (1997).

Unfortunately, however, the reinstatement of the legitimate President was not followed by peace. Criminal resistance by members of the former junta and their allies in the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) has continued to impose suffering on the Sierra Leonean people.

On 17 April the Council adopted resolution 1162 (1998), which sent to the area a group of 10 military liaison officers to strengthen the office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General and to cooperate with the Government and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). And on 5 June, resolution 1171 (1998) decided that the arms embargo would apply only to the rebel forces. Notwithstanding all this, resistance

continues in certain areas, and human suffering has not abated in the regions where the combat is taking place. The RUF continues to kill, maim and destroy, causing a flow of refugees to Liberia and Guinea.

At the same time we note that the Secretary-General has informed the Council that in some aspects the situation has improved considerably. We should now adopt a draft resolution that will establish the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) with a comprehensive mandate that we hope will assist in an effective way the task of promoting reconciliation, assist ECOWAS to end the fighting and help the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan agreed among the Government of Sierra Leone, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and other donors.

Very important are the human-rights and police components of UNOMSIL. The observance of humanitarian law is a precondition for durable peace. To uphold human rights is a requisite for a functioning democracy. The destruction caused by the junta and its allies will need to be addressed. It is our hope that the special United Nations conference on Sierra Leone will help to provide the much needed increase in assistance to that country.

The humanitarian situation and the plight of children that have been pressed into armed bands require continued attention. I wish to commend Ambassador Olara Otunnu, Under-Secretary-General Vieira de Mello and Mr. Francis Okelo for their important role in the efforts to cope with this grave situation.

Mr. Jagne (Gambia): Let me at the outset express my delegation's gratitude to the delegation of the United Kingdom for the timely initiative taken to come up with the draft resolution before us, geared towards the establishment of a United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). Such a mission, in our view, will complement the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). It will be seen as a mutually reinforcing partnership in the implementation of the plan for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

While not wishing to blow our own trumpet, we have to admit that ECOMOG has been playing its peacekeeping role in a manner that deserves not only praise but also our continued support in the form of logistics and material supplies. In this context, we would like to thank the United States and all other countries which have been helping ECOMOG in one way or another. This is all the more necessary as there is still some resistance in certain parts of the country by elements of the misguided erstwhile junta and the notorious Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in their unholy alliance to continue to wreak maximum havoc.

Against this background, and considering that UNOMSIL will not have a force of its own, the success of the Mission will depend to a large extent on the strength of ECOMOG both quantitatively and qualitatively. In fact, UNOMSIL will be deployed to secure areas only and it is ECOMOG which will provide the much-needed security.

That said, the fact remains that the establishment of UNOMSIL is a welcome development that should serve as a moral boost for the Government of Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and the people of Sierra Leone. We note with appreciation the efforts being made by the Government of Sierra Leone to consolidate its authority throughout the country to the extent possible, at the same time pursuing the important and difficult task of national reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation.

It is our fervent hope that the convening of a high-level conference to mobilize assistance for Sierra Leone will send the right signals to all Sierra Leoneans to speed up the process of national reconciliation. This does not exclude either the RUF rebels or the remnants of the ousted junta, who should now seize the opportunity offered to them to lay down their arms honourably, and to contribute constructively to the rebirth of their nation.

My delegation would also like to hail, as another moral boost, the mini-summit held recently in Abuja at the initiative of the Secretary-General, bringing together President Taylor and President Kabbah. We would like to commend the Secretary-General and the new Nigerian leadership for convening such an important meeting, which will no doubt strengthen confidence-building measures between the two neighbouring countries. It is gratifying to note that the non-aggression pact within the framework of the Mano River Union was evoked during the Abuja meeting.

All these developments augur well for the Observer Mission that we are about to establish in Sierra Leone. My delegation will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Richardson (United States of America): The international community has watched in horror as the situation in Sierra Leone has deteriorated. The ray of hope that we all felt when President Kabbah and his Government returned to Freetown in March was quickly overshadowed by the terrible atrocities committed by fleeing junta and rebel forces. We are extremely concerned by continuing fighting in the countryside, the massacres and maiming of civilians, reports of weapons flowing over the border to the rebels and the large numbers of refugees and displaced persons. The humanitarian situation urgently calls for our attention and resources to address the multiple needs for food, shelter and medical care. The United States will contribute over $55 million in assistance to Sierra Leone and refugees in neighbouring countries. More is needed from the international community; we will do our part.

In this human tragedy, the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG) carries the hopes of all the people of Sierra Leone who wish to live in peace under a democratic Government. ECOMOG has performed admirably in its efforts to provide security for the Government and the people of Sierra Leone. Adequate security is essential for humanitarian assistance, disarmament, demobilization, national reconciliation and development to be successful. We commend the leading role that the Economic Community of West African States, especially those countries that have contributed troops to ECOMOG, has taken to help a neighbour restore democratic order and regain basic security.

However, ECOMOG faces a bigger challenge than anyone expected, and it needs our help. ECOMOG must have additional troops, better transport and greater logistical support to continue to protect civilians from the ravages of the rebels and the former junta. We urge all the friends of Sierra Leone to assist ECOMOG as it continues to support the crucial task of re-establishing security to a fragile State.

Today's draft resolution is a vital part of that assistance. The United Nations military observers we are authorizing will augment ECOMOG by monitoring the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants, assessing the security situation and reporting on both military operations and human rights. The presence of United Nations observers should build confidence in the demobilization process. That process will be limited at first, given the current security situation, but the draft resolution provides flexibility in the deployment of the observers. As ECOMOG expands new secure zones, demobilization can take place in those areas of the country.

The relationship between ECOMOG and the United Nations observers will be cooperative, as it was in Liberia. We hope the Secretary-General will quickly conclude the status of mission agreements with the Government of Sierra Leone and the Economic Community of West African States. We applaud ECOMOG's commitment to partnership and protection of the United Nations Observer Mission.

This draft resolution reinforces our serious concern at reports of cross-border arms flows and support to the rebels in Sierra Leone, and it reiterates the arms embargo that the Council first authorized last October. The neighbouring States have responsibility for implementing that embargo. We welcome the Secretary-General's personal engagement on this issue, and were pleased by the meetings between Presidents Taylor and Kabbah in Abuja on 1-2 July. We join Presidents Taylor, Kabbah and Abubakar and Secretary-General Annan in deploring the atrocities carried out in Sierra Leone. Those responsible for such acts should be brought to justice. We demand an immediate halt to outside support to the rebels and former junta, from whatever source.

The United States has reservations about the proposal for border monitors under current circumstances. Preventing cross-border arms flows is a worthy idea. The unfortunate reality is that ECOMOG is already overstretched and does not have the capability to take on this responsibility. We believe the current priority should be to channel additional support for ECOMOG into its central function of providing security in Sierra Leone rather than monitoring the border or providing security for other monitors.

The draft resolution highlights the role of the Secretary-General's Special Representative in coordinating United Nations programmes in Sierra Leone. The Special Representative and his staff will advise the Government of Sierra Leone on the reform and restructuring of the police force and on human rights and international humanitarian law. We support the efforts of the Sierra Leone Government and the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict to make Sierra Leone a pilot project for addressing the needs of children in post-conflict peace-building.

As the Secretary-General's report on conflict in Africa outlined so well, coordination and planning among a variety of agencies and entities is critical to the success of conflict resolution and peace-building efforts. We hope that the successful model of international coordination among the United Nations, the Economic Community of West African States, regional States, non-governmental organizations and the donor community that assisted Liberia in its election and democratic transition last year will be further developed for Sierra Leone.

We welcome the United Nations plans to hold a special high-level conference on Sierra Leone later this month to coordinate planning for peace and security, support for ECOMOG and humanitarian assistance. We expect that significant steps will be taken at that conference towards addressing the many urgent needs in Sierra Leone.

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the Russian Federation.

Russia has repeatedly expressed its deep concern regarding the crisis in Sierra Leone. While firmly condemning the rebels, we have supported the demands of the African countries and the international community to restore constitutional order. Following the restoration of the legitimate Government in Sierra Leone, remnants of the deposed military junta continue to follow the path of military resistance. We condemn the inhumane acts of violence perpetrated against the civilian population and demand their immediate cessation.

The legitimate Government of Sierra Leone is now faced with the tasks of restoring peace and security, effective governance, developing the democratic process, reconstruction and restoration and, particularly important, achieving national reconciliation.

The draft resolution before us today attests to the importance the Security Council attaches to the restoration of peace and security in Sierra Leone and to the impact of the situation in that country on the situation in the subregion. The deployment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone, to be authorized by the Security Council, is an example of the strengthening of the coordination of actions between the United Nations and the regional and subregional organizations on peacekeeping issues, in particular between the Security Council and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which is making a significant contribution to the normalization of the situation in Sierra Leone.

A guarantee for the success of the new United Nations Mission is its comprehensive cooperation and close coordination with the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). It is extremely important that the tasks assigned to the Mission be linked to the concrete objectives of the Government of Sierra Leone for the restoration of peace and stability in the country.

Russia stands ready to participate actively in the work of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone, and in particular to provide it with military observers.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/1998/620) before it. If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bahrain, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, France, Gabon, Gambia, Japan, Kenya, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1181 (1998).

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.